

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 ACDA-12 IO-13 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /107 W  
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R 020820Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5743  
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING  
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3418

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, JA  
SUBJECT: POLICIES OF NEW SOCIALIST CHAIRMAN

REF: TOKYO 3092

SUMMARY. POLICY PROPOSALS OF JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY'S NEW CHAIRMAN, SHUNNING IDEOLOGICAL THEMES WHILE CALLING FOR REBUILDING OF PARTY BASED ON ENLARGED MEMBERSHIP AND DIALOGUE WITH PEOPLE, ARE MUCH MORE PRAGMATIC THAN THOSE OF PREDECESSORS. MEDIA HAVE WELCOME REALISM OF PROPOSALS BUT PARTY'S IDEOLOGICALLY INCLINED SOCIALISM ASSOCIATION WILL PROBABLY ARGUE AGAINST THEM AT JSP'S MARCH 14-16 CONVENTION. END SUMMARY.

1. ON BECOMING CHAIRMAN IN DECEMBER, ICHIO ASUKATA'S FIRST PROJECT WAS TO DIRECT PREPARATION OF PARTY'S ANNUAL ACTION PLAN TO BE SUBMITTED FOR DEBATE AT ANNUAL JSP CONVENTION MARCH 14-16. IN EARLY FEBRUARY WITH DRAFTING OF ACTION  
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PLAN UNDER WAY, ASUKATA UNDERTOOK SPEAKING TOUR FOR "DIALOGUE WITH MASSES." ASUKATA ADMITS THAT HIS WELL-PUBLICIZED SPEECHES BEFORE LARGE ASSEMBLAGE OF FISHERMEN IN KANAZAWA, LARGER GROUP OF SMALL BUSINESSMEN IN OSAKA, BEFORE ELDERLY IN TOKYO AND AT CONVENTION OF COAL MINERS IN HOKKAIDO WERE AT BEST ONLY SYMBOLIC, INTENDED TO STIMULATE CONTINUOUS DIALOGUE BETWEEN

LOCAL PARTY OFFICIALS AND LOCAL PEOPLE, THEREBY  
PLACING JSP POLICIES ON FIRM POPULAR GROUND THEY HAVE  
CONSPICUOUSLY LACKED IN PAST.

2. ACTION PLAN AS WELL AS ASUKATA SPEECHES HAVE  
STRESSED THEME OF MAKING JSP "HEALTHY PARTY AND OPEN  
PARTY." TO BE HEALTHY, ASUKATA SAYS, JSP MUST END  
ITS PREOCCUPATION WITH IDEOLOGY, WHICH HAD LED IT  
INTO DAMAGING INTERNAL STRIFE, AND CONCERN ITSELF  
MORE WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS POLITICAL GOALS.  
TO BE OPEN, JSP SHOULD PUT PRIORITY ON BROADENING  
ITS MEMBERSHIP BASE FROM ONLY 50,000 AT PRESENT TO  
1,000,000. ASUKATA SAYS THIS WIDER MEMBERSHIP BASE  
WOULD FREE JSP FROM WHAT PUBLIC HAS PERCEIVED AS ITS  
NARROW DEPENDENCE ON SOHYO UNIONS AND ENABLE IT TO  
RELATE MORE DIRECTLY TO PUBLIC.

3. NEITHER ACTION PLAN NOR SPEECHES SAY MUCH ABOUT  
JSP'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER PARTIES. ON OPPOSITION  
PARTY COALITION, MAJOR FOCUS OF ACTION PLANS OF PREVIOUS  
ADMINISTRATION, HE IS COMPLETELY NEGATIVE, SAYING TIME  
IS FAR FROM RIPE AND THAT JSP'S EFFORTS WOULD BE BETTER  
SPENT IN REBUILDING ITSELF. HE CRITICIZES MODERATE  
OPPOSITION PARTIES FOR MOVING TOWARDS LDP, THEREBY  
"DEEPENING STAGNATION OF RENOVATIONIST FORCES."  
DESPITE THAT SUPPOSED RIGHTWARD MOVEMENT, JSP FULLY  
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INTENDS TO CONTINUE COOPERATING WITH OTHER OPPOSITION  
PARTIES IN DIET SINCE THOSE EFFORTS HELP BUILD PUBLIC  
SUPPORT FOR EVENTUAL COALITION.

4. ASUKATA HAS NOTHING NEW TO SAY ABOUT US-JAPAN  
DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP, FALLING BACK ON STOCK PARTY  
LANGUAGE, WHICH CONDEMNS MST, DEPLORES BUILDUP OF  
SDF, AND CONDEMNS ALLEGED AMERICAN ENCOURAGEMENT OF  
JAPAN'S TAKING UP LARGER SHARE OF DEFENSE BURDEN.  
BEYOND DEFENSE, ASUKATA WANTS PARTY TO PURSUE  
"BANANCED DIPLOMACY" IN REGARD TO THREE GREAT POWERS,  
US, USSR AND PRC. TOWARD THIS AIM, AS NOTED REFTTEL,  
ASUKATA WILL VISIT CHINA IN LATE MARCH AND WOULD  
LIKE TO VISIT US AND USSR WHEN TIME PERMITS.

5. MEDIA HAVE GIVEN MUCH PUBLICITY BOTH TO DRAFT  
ACTION PLAN AND TO ASUKATA'S SPEAKING TOUR, EDITORIALS  
IN ALL MAJOR DAILIES WARMLY WELCOMING WHAT THEY SEE  
AS JSP'S SHIFT AWAY FROM EXCESSIVE IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTA-  
TION TO MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH. ALL AGREED THAT, AS  
ASUKATA SAID, CAUSE OF JSP'S STEADY DECLINE OVER PAST  
DECADE WAS ITS OVEREMPHASIS ON IDEOLOGY AND ACCOMPANYING

FACTIONAL STRIFE.

6. IMPORTANT GROUP WITH WHOM ASUKATA'S POLICY LINE DOES NOT, HOWEVER, SIT WELL IS SOCIALISM ASSOCIATION, PARTY'S HARD-CORE FAR-LEFT WING, SMALL IN TERMS OF DIETMEN BUT LARGE IN TERMS OF RANK-AND-FILE MEMBERSHIP, WHOSE PRONOUNCED INDEOLOGICAL BENT HAS FUELED JSP'S INTERNAL FIGHTING DURING PAST FEW YEARS. EVEN THOUGH ASUKATA, HIMSELF VERY MUCH AN IDEOLOGICAL MARXIST, CAREFULLY INTERLARDED HIS ACTION PLAN AND SPEECHES WITH APPROPRIATE REFERENCES TO MARXIST THEORY, JSP STAFFERS TOLD EMBOFF SOCIALISM ASSOCIATION DELEGATES AT CONVENTIONN WERE EXPECTED TO ARGUE STRONGLY AGAINST ADOPTION OF ACTION PLAN ON GROUNDS THAT IT HAS INSUFFI-  
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CIENT THEORETICAL BASIS. THEY DOUBTED, HOWEVER, WHETHER ASSOCIATION HAD ENOUGH CLOUT TO FORCE ANY SORT OF MAJOR REVISION; MORE LIKELY OUTCOME WOULD BE FOR ASUKATA TO MOLLIFY ASSOCIATION BY AGREEING TO MIX A BIT MORE MARXIST VERBIAGE INTO TEXT.  
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## Message Attributes

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